



Day One: Wednesday, January 13, 2016

7:30-8:30 Registration

8:30-10:00 Day One Opening Plenary Session

- Welcome by Galveston Bay Council Chair Nancy Parra
- Welcome by Galveston Mayor James D. Yarbrough
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Regional Administrator for Region 6 Ron Curry
- *State of the Bay – Challenges and Successes of the Past and Present* by Lisa Gonzalez, Vice President, HARC, and Jim Lester, Ph.D., President, HARC

10:00-10:30 Morning Break

10:30-12:00 Concurrent Session I

Room 1 - Outreach and Citizen Volunteer Involvement

- *Citizen Engagement for Improved Water Quality in Galveston Bay* by Neally Rhea and Sarah Gossett, Galveston Bay Foundation
- *Public Outreach Toolbox* by Amanda Thorin, Houston-Galveston Area Council
- *Increasing Estuarine Water Quality and Quantity Through Watershed Experiential Education* by Amanda Rinehart, Ph.D., Education Program Manager, Artist Boat

Room 2 –Ecosystem Services and Economic Valuation of Galveston Bay

- *Changes in Ecosystem Services from Galveston Bay and Surrounding Watersheds Over 40 Years* by Jim Lester, Ph.D., President, HARC
- *Looking Beyond Ecological Functions to the Value of Ecosystem Services: Incorporating Ecosystem Services into Infrastructure and*

Policy Decisions in the Greater Houston Region by Deborah January-Bevers, President and CEO, Houston Wilderness

- *Blue Carbon: A New Tool For Valuing Coastal Ecosystems?* by Stefanie Simpson, Restore America's Estuaries
- *Estimating the Value of Blue Carbon in Galveston Bay* by Jorge Brenner, Ph.D., The Nature Conservancy

Room 3 – Economic Benefits of Nature and Outdoor Tourism and Recreation in the Galveston Bay Watershed

- *Nature and Tourism: Who's Protecting Paradise from the Masses?* by Kelly de Schaun, Executive Director, Galveston Parks Board of Trustees
- *Economic Impact Study of National Wildlife Refuges in Lower Trinity River Area* by Tim Cooper, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- *Bayou Greenways Initiative: Getting People Outdoors and on the Bayous*, Houston Parks Board (invited)

Room 4 - Invasive Species Monitoring, Management, and Prevention

Panel Session moderated by Lisa Gonzalez and Stephanie Glenn , HARC, on topics that include:

- current status of species invasions (plants, animals, and disease organisms) in the lower Galveston Bay watershed;
- programs to monitor species invasions;
- techniques to manage invasive species in aquatic and terrestrial systems;
- developments in invasive species regulation in Texas; and
- public education efforts and risk assessment tools to prevent future species invasions.

12:00-1:15 Luncheon with keynote speaker Ross Melinchuk, Deputy Executive Director of Natural Resources, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

1:30-3:00 **Concurrent Session II**

Room 1 – Citizen Outreach and Metrics: Measuring Outcomes

- *City of Pasadena's Successful Environmental Education and Outreach Programs* by Luz Locke, Environmental Services and Engineering Department, City of Pasadena

- *Cease the Grease: A Public Awareness Campaign for Fats, Oils and Grease* by Neally Rhea and Charlene Bohanon, Water Programs Manager, Galveston Bay Foundation
- *Back the Bay Public Awareness Campaign for Galveston Bay* by Cynthia Clevenger, Community Relations Specialist, Galveston Bay Estuary Program

Room 2 – Balancing Freshwater Inflows for Galveston Bay

- *Drought and Salinity Patterns in Galveston Bay, 1950-Present* by Carla Guthrie, Ph.D., Texas Water Development Board
- *Proactive Approaches to Secure Freshwater Inflows: Investigations of Scope, Scale, and Feasibility* by Norman Johns and Joe Trungale, National Wildlife Federation
- *Evaluating Freshwater Inflow, Nutrients, and Sediment Supply from the Trinity River into Galveston Bay* by Zulimar Lucena and Michael Lee, U.S. Geological Survey

Room 3 – Water Quality Planning and Assessment

- *Flushing Out Onsite Sewage Facility (OSSF) Problems: Innovative Mapping and Education Help Lead the Way* by William Merrell, Houston-Galveston Area Council
- *Streambank Stabilization, Riparian Stewardship, and Sediment Load Reduction in Harris County Watersheds* by Carolyn White, Harris County Flood Control District
- *Examination of the Spatial Relationship Between Development and Aquatic Nutrient Loading in the Galveston Bay Estuary* by Helen Walters, research fellow, Center for Texas Beaches and Shores, Texas A&M University Galveston
- *Modeling Bacterial Loads in a Coastal Watershed* by Ryan Bare and Brad Neish, HARC

Room 4 – Status of Oysters in Galveston Bay

- *Status and Management of Public Oyster Reefs in Galveston Bay* by Christine Jensen, Coastal Fisheries Division, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- *Restoring Oyster Habitats in Galveston Bay: Current Achievement and Future Challenges* by William Rodney, Coastal Fisheries Division, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

- *Determining Factors Affecting Dermo Disease of Oysters in Galveston Bay* by Elizabeth Silvy, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences, Texas A&M Galveston

3:00-3:30 Afternoon break

3:30-5:00 **Concurrent Session III**

Room 1 – Research and Monitoring of Species Trends in Galveston Bay

- *The Effect of Four Environmental Parameters on the Structure of Estuarine Communities* by Robert McFarlane, Ph.D., HARC Fellow
- *Where Them Fish At? An Overview of the Population and Habitat Characteristics of the Saltmarsh Topminnow (*Fundulus jenkinsi*) in Galveston Bay and Sabine Lake* by Josi Robertson, University of Houston Clear Lake
- *Trends in the Abundance of Texas Diamond-Backed Terrapin, *Malaclemys Terrapin Littoralis*, in Galveston Bay* by George Guillen, Ph.D., Environmental Institute of Houston, University of Houston Clear Lake

Room 2 – Indicators for Estuarine Health of Galveston Bay

- *Macrobenthic Communities of Galveston Bay from 1988-2012* by Linda Broach, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
- *Bioindicators of Freshwater Inflows: Response to the Trinity River/San Jacinto River BBEST Recommendations* by Jamie Steichen, Texas A&M University Galveston
- *Bioindicators for Freshwater Inflows: Microbial Traits* by Alicia Williams, Texas A&M Galveston
- *Bioindicators of Freshwater Inflows: Phytoplankton Diversity* by Hannah Preischel, Texas A&M University Galveston

Room 3 – Watershed Protection Planning: Stakeholder Involvement

Introduction to the watershed protection planning process and objectives followed by a panel discussion on stakeholder engagement with panelists:

- Cedar Bayou Watershed Partnership - Justin Bower, Houston-Galveston Area Council
- Oyster Waters Bacteria Implementation Plan, Charlene Bohanon, water quality programs manager, Galveston Bay Foundation

- Double Bayou Watershed Partnership, Linda Shead, P.E., Shead Conservation Solutions
- Dickinson Bayou Watershed Partnership, Charriss York, program specialist, Texas Coastal Watershed Program, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Room 4 – The State of the Birds in Galveston Bay

- *Colonial Waterbirds Rookery Island Restoration in Galveston Bay* by Jarrett (Woody) Woodrow, fish and wildlife biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- *Bird Monitoring in the Galveston Bay Watershed: Current Efforts And Opportunities to Fill Data Gaps* by Richard Gibbons, Ph.D., Conservation Director, Houston Audubon Society
- *Coastal Habitat Restoration: Lessons Learned and a Path Forward to Sustainable Management of Critical Migratory Bird Stopover Habitat* by Peter Deichmann, Conservation Specialist, Houston Audubon Society
- *The Status of American Oystercatchers in Galveston Bay* by Susan Heath, Ph.D., avian conservation biologist, Gulf Coast Bird Observatory

5:15-6:30 **Evening Poster Session Reception**

Day Two: Thursday, January 14, 2016

7:30-8:30 **Morning Networking**

8:30-10:00 **Day 2 Opening Plenary Session**

- Welcome by Galveston Bay Estuary Program Manager Sarah Bernhardt, Ph.D.
- *State of the Bay: The Future of Preservation of Galveston Bay and an Introduction to the Texas Coastal Atlas for Galveston Bay* by Sam Brody, Ph.D., The Center for Texas Beaches and Shores, Texas A&M Galveston, and Stuart Carlton, Ph.D., Texas SeaGrant College Program, Texas A&M Galveston

10:00-10:30 Morning Break

10:30-12:00 **Concurrent Session IV**

Room 1 – Protecting and Monitoring Coastal Bird Habitats

- *Texas Estuarine Resource Network (TERN) Program* by Kari Howard, Audubon Texas
- *Reducing Human Disturbance of Beach-Nesting Birds on the Texas Coast Using Targeted Outreach* by Kacy Ray, American Bird Conservancy
- *Beach-Nesting Bird Management at Two Galveston Bay Locations* by Kristen Vale, Houston Audubon Society

Room 2 – Tools for Making Decisions to Protect Galveston Bay

- *The Galveston Bay Report Card: Connecting People to Their Estuary—But Wait, What’s an Estuary?* by Anja Borski, Galveston Bay Foundation
- *The Galveston Bay Report Card: Using Science to Address Stakeholder Concerns* by Erin Kinney, Ph.D., HARC
- *Gulf of Mexico Program’s Coastal Community Resilience Index* by Tracie Sempier, University of Mississippi
- *Community Health and Resources Management (CHARM) Mapping Application* by Steven Mikulencak, AICP, Texas A&M FEMA CERC Programs Leader, Texas Coastal Watershed Program, Texas A&M University AgriLife Extension Service

Room 3 - Best Management Practices for Water Quality Management

- *Wetlands in Suburbia: A Response to Water Quality, Flooding, and Habitat Loss in the Greater Houston Region* by Mary Carol Edwards, Stormwater Wetland Program, Texas Coastal Watershed Program, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
- *Evaluating the Effectiveness of Low Impact Development Practices at the Ghirardi Family Watersmart Park in League City, TX* by Charriss York, Texas Coastal Watershed Program, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
- *Designing for Impact: Promoting Low Impact Development in the Houston-Galveston Region* by Mary Martha Gaiennie, Houston-Galveston Area Council

Room 4 – Estuarine Restoration and Created Marshes

- *Maximizing Wetland Restoration Success in Galveston Bay: Lessons on the Influences of Construction Techniques and the Surrounding Landscape* by Anna Armitage, Department of Marine Biology, Texas A&M University
- *Comparing Salt Marsh Ecosystem Responses to Different Restoration Techniques* by Jim Dobberstine, Math, Engineering, and Sciences Division at Lee College in Baytown
- *Effects of Pierce Marsh Restoration Site Design and Age on Naturally Recruited Plant Diversity* by Cindy Howard, School of Science and Computer Engineering, University of Houston Clear Lake
- *Living Shorelines: Small-Scale Restoration Efforts and Their Ecological Impacts on Local Communities* by Lee Anne Wilde, Galveston Bay Foundation

12:00-1:15 Luncheon Keynote Speaker

1:30-3:00 **Concurrent Session V**

Room 1 – Education and Outreach for Habitat and Water Conservation

- *Coastal Habitat Restoration and Conservation in the Galveston Area Following Hurricane Ike* by Nathan Johnson, Artist Boat
- *Prairie Rising: A Model for Collaborative Service Learning* by Mark Kramer, Armand Bayou Nature Center
- *Water Use Efficiency and Water Conservation Education as Tools to Manage Water Resources in the Greater Houston-Galveston Area* by Emily Seldomridge, Ph.D., Galveston Bay Foundation

Room 2 – Trash Free Waters

- *Plastics Pollution Prevention Partnership* by Stennie Meadours, Houston Audubon Society and Galveston Bay Area Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists
- *Trash Bash: 21 Years of Education and Outreach on Trash Pollution in the Galveston Bay Watershed* by Rebecca Begley, Houston-Galveston Area Council
- *Don't Mess with Texas Celebrating 30 Years of One of the Most Successful Litter Education and Outreach Campaigns* by Brenda Flores-Dollar, Texas Department of Transportation (Invited)

Room 3 – Protecting Public Health

- *Galveston Bay Seafood Advisory Education Campaign: Methods, Lessons Learned and the Path Forward* by Scott Jones, Galveston Bay Foundation
- *Emerging Water Quality Hazards in Urbanizing Texas Estuaries* by Bryan Brooks, Ph.D., Department of Environmental Sciences, Baylor University
- *Mercury Monitoring in Texas Waters of the Gulf of Mexico: A Concurrent Study with the National Coastal Condition Assessment* by Nicole Morris, Environmental Institute of Houston, University of Houston Clear Lake
- *San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site: Community Education and Clean Up Status* by Scott Jones, Galveston Bay Foundation

Room 4 – Conservation Blueprint for the Future of Galveston Bay

Panel discussion on the approaches, elements, and funding ideas for a blueprint for the Texas coast and a comprehensive master plan to guide future decisions on growth, development, erosion response, habitat protection and restoration.

- General Land Office (invited)
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (invited)
- Ray Allen – Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program
- Deborah January-Bevers – Gulf Coast Regional Conservation Plan

3:00

End of Symposium